

This Week's News

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday May 17th, 2026

IRTS Updates

The IRTS committee is delighted to announce the return of our hugely successful HAMFEST. This year, having listened to our members feedback, we have decided to hold it on the 8th and 9th of August 2026 in the Mullingar Showgrounds, Culleen, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. Interested attendees can get more information by contacting Andy at hamfest /at/ irts.ie or keep an eye on our social media channels for more information.

On May 12th, IRTS president Jeffrey Roe EI7IRB, visited the Chemnitz-Süd ham radio club, based in the city of Chemnitz. The city is the third-largest city in Saxony, well recognised for its strong technical heritage, home to 250,000 residents, and 10,000 university students. The club operates within a region recognised for its strong technological heritage. The club is active across a wide range of activities. Members regularly participate in events such as the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend and Linux Days. During the visit, Jeffrey had the opportunity to meet with club members and learn more about their ongoing projects. The IRTS extends its appreciation to Jens DB5JH, Mario DM5AHA, Carsten DG0JCG, Jürgen DL4JWU, Wolfgang DL5WSC, and Veiko DM9TT for their generous welcome and hospitality.

North Dublin Radio Club at Ardgillan Castle Next Weekend

North Dublin Radio Club, EI0NDR, will be QRV from Ardgillan Castle on Sunday next the 24th of May for a public demonstration of amateur radio, along with a Parks on the Air activation. The club will be operating from within the castle itself. The POTA reference is IE-0136 and visitors are welcome to come along between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. local time. Ardgillan Castle Demesne dates from the 1730s when it became the family home of the Taylor family. It was purchased by Dublin County Council in 1982 and has a wonderful range of amenities which include castle tours, spectacular gardens, an art gallery, craft shop, playground, heritage trails, and tearooms. The demesne is located near Balbriggan, Eircode K34 C984. Entrance and car parking are free.

New Club Launch: SETU Radio Society (EI0SETU)

Following Europe Day 2026, a new amateur radio society has been launched in the South East. The SETU Radio Society (SRS), which is affiliated with the IRTS, has officially been granted the callsign EI0SETU by ComReg to operate from the SETU Carlow Campus. The society's mission is to provide a dedicated space for experimentation and technical growth, offering a collaborative environment where theory is put into practice. The SRS is welcoming new members from across the SETU community and beyond, specifically inviting current students, staff, and alumni, along with radio enthusiasts from throughout the South East. Those interested in amateur radio or technical experimentation are encouraged to get involved by contacting the society's organizers directly for more information.

South Eastern Amateur Radio Group EI2WRC

The May meeting of the EI2WRC group will take place on Monday, May 25th at 8 p.m. sharp at the South East Technological University, Netlabs Research and Innovation Building, SETU West Campus, Carriganore, Waterford. The Eircode X91 WR86. New members or anyone that has an

interest in amateur radio or communications in general are very welcome to come along. SWLs are in particular very welcome to attend also. For more information about EI2WRC, their activities, and for contact details please see www.searg.ie

Galway Radio Experimenters Club – Direction Finding Event, Sunday 24th May

The Galway Radio Experimenters Club is pleased to announce that it will be hosting a Radio Direction Finding (RDF) Event on Sunday, 24th May, in the East Galway region. The event will commence at 14:30, with the designated starting point at Centra, Carnmore West, Oranmore, Galway. The Eircode is H91 W9KH. This fun and engaging event is open to all radio enthusiasts, newcomers, and anyone interested in the challenge of locating a hidden radio transmitter. Participants will be issued the operating frequency on the day, and the hidden beacon will be located somewhere within the area covered by Ordnance Survey Ireland Discovery Series Map No. 46. Competitors will use radio direction finding techniques to track down the transmitter.

The Galway Radio Experimenters Club encourages anyone with an interest in amateur radio to take part. Those wishing to participate or seeking further information are invited to contact the club through the Contact Us page on the official website which is galwayradio.com

Propagation Update

Solar activity has remained relatively steady, with the solar flux index hovering around 100. However, the sunspot number has trended downward over the past five days, sitting in the mid-40s. The geomagnetic field experienced a period of significant disturbance over the weekend, with a G2-level moderate geomagnetic storm occurring on Friday and Saturday. This storm, driven by a high-speed solar wind stream from a large coronal hole, saw the planetary K-index reach a peak of 6. This led to some signal absorption on polar paths and unsettled conditions across the HF bands. As we move into the early part of this week, conditions are expected to begin a gradual recovery. The K-index is forecast to drop to 3 or 4, transitioning from active to unsettled. For HF operators, this means that while the higher bands like 10 and 12 metres may remain somewhat suppressed in the short term, the mid-to-lower bands should offer fair to good daytime propagation as the ionosphere stabilises.

VHF/Microwave News

VHF, UHF, and microwave enthusiasts should keep a close eye on the bands as the week progresses. According to dxinfocentre.com, some promising propagation opportunities are expected to develop towards the latter end of the week. An arriving shift in weather patterns, with high pressure beginning to build from the south and southwest, is forecast to create stable atmospheric temperature inversions. Operators on the 2-metre, 70-centimetre, and higher microwave bands are encouraged to monitor local and international beacons, as well as the usual FT8 and SSB calling frequencies, for signs of opening paths across the Irish Sea.

IARU Intruder Watch Service Newsletter

The International Amateur Radio Union's Intruder Watch Service has released its latest update. Authorized by the IARU Administrative Council and operated by dedicated volunteers, the primary objective of this worldwide service is to search for, identify, and document non-amateur stations causing harmful interference within amateur bands. The April edition of their free monthly report, which highlights recent intruder activities and tracking successes, is now

available to download. Interested operators can access the document by visiting the Intruder Watch Service page on the IARU Region 1 website at iaru-r1.org

BBC's 198kHz Service Closes on June 27th

For low-frequency radio listeners, the BBC has officially confirmed that its long-standing BBC Radio 4 Long Wave service on 198 kHz will close on Saturday, June 27th, 2026. The historical service, which is transmitted from the Droitwich, Burghead, and Westerglen broadcast sites, has been a staple for listeners across Ireland and the UK for generations. The expected time of final closure will be at midnight UTC on the morning of Saturday, June 27th. The shutdown comes as the transmission infrastructure reaches the end of its operational life.

Items for Inclusion in Next Week's Radio News

That is the news for this week. Thanks to everyone for sending items into the weekly IRTS radio news. They are very much appreciated and are a great way to update the rest of the community about activities. If you have any club events, activities, meetings, or other items of interest, you are very welcome to email the radio news editor Keith EI5IN via email to newsteam@irts.ie with the details. The deadline each week is midnight on Thursdays. Items intended for inclusion in Echo Ireland, which is the IRTS quarterly journal, should be sent to echoireland@irts.ie
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